grounds, for [illegible] rooms - which I need not refer to - it seems to me that you will go to a different building - one with foundations, and a cellar, and two stories. - In fact you will probably come to a quadrangle, of which you will now build one or two sides,

We remember, last evening, the reception at your house, and longed to be there, mingling with the throng.

I am going in an hour to Admiral Davis's funeral, to act as one of the pall-bearers - four civilians to join the four officers,

Ever sincerely
Your friend Asa Gray

Private

HERBARIUM OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
BOTANIC GARDEN, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Feb. 21, 1877

My dear old Friend

Yours of the 15th inst. is received, and has been read with much interest. It seems that you may take courage in the hope of seeing your views and wishes for the Institution carried into effect.

The initiation by Congress itself of action which would result in the separation of the National Museum from the Institution, is what - as you know - I regarded as the best thing of all. But I hardly expected it. The ~~affair~~

affixing by Congress of the condition you refer to, viz. that the building shall be by itself, is the first and most important step.

I am interested to see, too, that the objection you felt at having the Smithsonian edifice left on your hands, may also disappear. The income you might derive from having the Signal-Service bureau, and I will add, the Light-House Board, as tenants (both particularly proper tenants) would make up for any loss; "keep a thing a dozen years and you will find a use for it", says an old proverb. The Signal Service may utilize your towers, which I rarely pass without a mental knashing of the teeth at the amount of money gone up into the empty air.

But that is one thing to consider in case Senator Morrill's views are entered in the appropriation. The sort of building, planned by Gen. Meigs was appropriate for its purpose and position - but would be inappropriate for the National Museum by itself, both for practical use, and as an edifice to stand by itself in the